



Water Quality NewsFlash

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PAHs from Parking Lots – Senators ask for EPA action – Two U.S. Senators from the Committee on Environment and Public Works urged EPA to “perform a national study and report its findings on how coal-tar based sealants increase PAHs in water bodies, and the effects of these PAHs on human health and the environment.” PAHs are sometimes found in roadway runoff and the source was generally thought to be motor oil, tire wear, and vehicle exhaust. Some PAHs are carcinogens and bioaccumulate through the food chain. About 17 different PAHs are tracked for environmental purposes and most of these have water quality objectives based on EPA criteria.

Concentrations of PAHs appear to be increasing in recent years in waterway sediments sampled by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) while many other pollutants are tending to decrease (zinc concentrations are also increasing). USGS researchers working with the city of Austin identified sealants commonly used on parking lots as a major source of PAHs which is the basis for the request from the Senators. USGS webpage for the National Water Quality Assessment Program: http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa/asphalt_sealers.html Letter from Committee on Environment and Public Works and attachments: <http://jeffords.senate.gov/epaletter090606attach.pdf>

Trash Control – Report identifies BMPs – Using SWRCB grant funding, the Coastal Commission and the Algalita Foundation have issued a report on trash BMPs. The report describes nine specific technologies that have been implemented in California including Caltrans two Gross Solids Removal Devices (GSRD). It also describes institutional and source control BMPs such as street sweeping and anti-littering enforcement. Posted: http://www.plasticdebris.org/Trash_BMPs_for_Munis.pdf

Prozac – Contraindicated for Mussels – Prozac and other pharmaceuticals and personal care products have been detected in surface waters. These chemicals or their breakdown products can remain active even after passing through people and treatment plants. A recent study showed that Prozac can cause premature spawning in freshwater mussels, some species of which are threatened or endangered. http://www.nist.gov/sigma/Posters06/17%20Heltsley%20@%201-5-06/Sigma%20Xi_2006_Rebecca%20Heltsley.htm

Santa Monica Bay Dry Weather TMDL – Implementation via MS4 permit – The Los Angeles Regional Board adopted the provisions of the Santa Monica Bay Beaches Bacteria Dry Weather TMDL into the Los Angeles area MS4 permit after a lengthy and contentious hearing on September 14. The TMDL is intended to eliminate or significantly reduce bacteria loading from dry weather flows. Gov. Schwarzenegger submitted a letter urging the board to implement the TMDL. http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/html/meetings/public_notices.html Article: <http://www.contracostatimes.com/mld/cctimes/news/state/15521889.htm>

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